



Traffic Safety News and Facts for Employers December 20, 2006

Michigan News You Can Use

Michigan Traffic Safety Summit

Please save the date, March 13-14, 2007 for the annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit taking place at the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, East Lansing. Twenty-eight breakout sessions are planned and include the following confirmed speakers:

- Christopher L. Drake, Senior Staff Scientist, Henry Ford Hospital Sleep Center and Assistant Professor, Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences, Wayne State College of Medicine
- Darrel Drobnich, Chief Program Officer, Policy, Education and Research, National Sleep Foundation
- Thomas M. Granda, Leader for the Human Centered Systems Team, Office of Safety Research and Development, Federal Highway Administration
- Chuck Hurley, Chief Executive Officer, MADD national
- John Kwasnoski, Professor Emeritus, Western New England College, Springfield, MA, and Crash Reconstructionist, "Lethal Weapon - DWI Homicide" team, National Traffic Law Center
- Anne McCartt, Vice President, Research, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
- Dr. Stewart Wang, Attending Surgeon, University of Michigan Trauma Center, and Director, Program for Injury Research and Education

Please link to the following site for registration information: http://michigan.gov/msp/0,1607,7-123-1593_3504_8271---,00.html

Latest Traffic Safety News

94% Of Businesses Host Holiday Parties

According to Battalia Winston International's Annual Survey on Corporate Holiday Celebrations an increasing number of organizations are planning holiday parties this year. The survey of 110 leading U.S. businesses found that 94% of those surveyed will have some type of year-end party, up from 87 percent in 2005. Among the employers who will have some type of holiday celebration, 86 percent will serve alcohol, according to the Battalia Winston survey. Serving alcohol poses certain challenges for the employer.

NETS Reminds Employers to Be Responsible Corporate Hosts To Prevent Impaired Driving:

- Provide plenty of food when serving alcohol beverages.
- Avoid greasy and salty foods, which tend to encourage more alcohol consumption.
- Do not serve alcohol punch or other beverages that make it difficult to gauge how much alcohol one consumes.
- Offer non-alcohol beverages.
- Limit the number of alcohol beverages employees consume by giving each employee a set number of tickets that are the only means of obtaining alcoholic beverages.
- To limit harm and liability, be certain that bartenders have been trained not to over-pour drinks and serve those who appear to be intoxicated.
- Do not use employees to tend bar or provide alcohol.



- Review your organization's insurance policies for alcohol-related exclusions.
- Stop serving alcohol at least one hour before the party ends.
- Encourage employees to sign up as designated drivers before the event.
- Arrange safe rides home for all employees or offer to pay cab or hotel expense if employees obviously are alcohol-impaired.
- Designate someone, preferably a supervisor, to refrain from drinking to monitor the party with event staff to curtail excessive serving of alcohol.
- Provide enough food and entertainment so that drinking is not the party's focus.

National High Visibility Enforcement Crackdown To Combat Drunk Driving

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) announce an enforcement crackdown on drunk drivers. The nationwide campaign, Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest. will kick off on December 18th. Law enforcement from across the U.S. will be out in force to remove drunk drivers from the road this holiday season through high-visibility enforcement, including sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols.

GM unveils state-of-the-art rollover testing facility

General Motors (GM) Corp. unveiled its state-of-the-art \$10.2 million rollover testing facility in Milford. At the new testing facility at its Milford Proving Grounds, GM will perform 150 rollover tests next year in an effort to better understand rollover crashes, unpredictable events that account for less than 3 percent of all crashes but 25 percent of traffic deaths. By 2012, GM will make rollover-enabled air bags standard on all retail vehicles. Currently, the air bags are on 43 percent of light trucks and SUVs. The new facility will allow GM to dramatically increase testing and publish the findings in an effort to find better ways to keep unbelted drivers from being ejected; and keeping belted drivers better restrained. That anti-rollover technology uses sensors to help avoid loss of vehicle control and, subsequently, rollover crashes.

IIHS Says Driver Training Alone Does Not Lead To Lower Crash Rates

According to David Zuby, VP for vehicle research at the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), "research on driver training suggests that it doesn't, by itself, lead to lower crash rates among drivers. Certainly some kinds of training, with some level of monitoring and enforcement to make sure a driver is adhering to safe driving practices can be effective. But simply giving somebody training doesn't necessarily lead to that person being a safer driver." IIHS puts more faith in safety systems than in driver training to keep employees safe. For further information, visit: <http://www.iihs.org>

Ohio Truckers To Be Cited For Smoking

Ohio has a new public smoking ban that extends to company vehicles of all types based in Ohio. Like bars and restaurants, trucks now have to get rid of ashtrays and post no-smoking signs at all entrances. SmokeFree Ohio wrote the law passed by Ohio voters last month. The intent is to protect employees in vehicles used by more than one person, even if different drivers use a vehicle at different times. Trucking companies report 40 to 75 percent of their drivers smoke.

Source: Plain Dealer Reporter

Sirius To Offer TV Service To Cars By 2007

Sirius Satellite Radio expects to offer a live television service to cars by late 2007. The mobile video geared toward young viewers sitting in the back seat will be available in 2008 model lines. Larger rival XM Satellite Radio Holdings has also talked about the possibility of nationwide broadcast of live TV to



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cars. However, XM has said it would wait for signs of a significant market before it rolled out such a service.

County Executive Initiates Campaign to Stop Driver Distractions

For many drivers, navigating traffic is just one of several priorities. There are cellphone calls to be made, newspapers to be read and hairdos to be fixed. But the distracted driver, it seems, is a dangerous one. Andrew J. Spano, the Westchester, NY county executive started a public relations campaign last month designed to curb distracted driving. The campaign includes brochures, a Web site and a cable television advertisement. Mr. Spano said in a statement. "You've got to keep yourself focused on driving when you are behind the wheel." Source: NY Times

AZ DPS Uses Lidar To Stop Tailgaters

The Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) has a new device to take out tailgaters. Using a new laser device, Lidar, that measures the distance between two moving vehicles, officers are citing hundreds of motorists with tailgating tickets that can run more than \$100. And they are promising more to come. Tailgating accounts for most of the collisions in the Valley and the majority of drivers involved indicate that they don't realize they are tailgating when asked. The new device is virtually argument-proof and allows law enforcement officers to show motorists exactly how close they were following another vehicle. The Arizona driver's license manual cautions motorists to keep at least two seconds between their vehicle and the one in front of them to allow enough time to react if the front driver slams on the brakes. Source: Arizona Republic

Tech-Savvy Consumers Want Wired Vehicles

The Los Angeles Auto Show manufacturers are incorporating technology and gadgets in their cars to appeal to a society that seems to always have something plugged in. "Consumers expect it, they want it," said Jennifer Capasso, a public relations representative for Honda. The demand for dealer-installed electronics is expected to rise quicker than the demand for cars, according to a 2005 survey by The Freedonia Group, which studies industry trends. The integration of automotive electronics systems has become a top-of-mind concern. Many companies at the auto show offer either wireless or MP3 hookups. Those catering to young drivers have an iPod dock standard in every car. The MP3 attachments have become a feature everyone wants in every car. Source: Ventura County Star

NYC DOT Introduces New Signs And Pavement Markings to Promote Safe Cycling

The New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) Commissioner announced completion of newly designed shared lane signs and bicycle pavement markings along heavily traveled bicycle routes will heighten awareness among drivers and cyclists and help everyone get where they are going safely. The new design for the city's bike routes will improve conditions for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists. The new markings and signs are intended to make both bicyclists and motorists aware of the single lane, to which both users have equal access. With these designs, DOT is encouraging cyclists to ride assertively outside of the "door zone" and expecting motorists to be patient and pass bikes only with ample clearance and at a modest speed. Cyclists are also expected to stay clear of parking, ride at a reasonable pace, in a predictable manner, and not pass vehicles on the left side.

TxDOT To Ground Santa's Reindeer For Drinking

Santa's reindeer star in a new animated TV commercial produced by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and will air throughout Texas this month. In the spot, Santa's reindeer are grounded for drinking on Christmas Eve, prompting Santa to hook up his sleigh to a quartet of yellow taxis. TxDOT's message to holiday revelers: if you've been drinking, designate a driver or take a cab to get home safely. State officials are urging motorists to take the precautionary step of planning ahead



to get home safely when their holiday celebrations include alcohol. The Texas Restaurant Association, the Texas Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association, the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, the Texas Municipal Police Association and Valero Corporation are also participating in the holiday DWI-prevention campaign.

Speeding, Drowsy Driving Triple Odds Of Crashing

Driving faster than surrounding traffic, driving while drowsy, not paying attention and aggressive driving are associated with increased risk of being involved in crashes, according to a recent study sponsored by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. AAA estimates that you will be sharing the road with 51 million people between Christmas and New Years, so it is essential to know how to reduce the likelihood of being involved in a crash. The AAA Foundation's research found four driving behaviors directly associated with an increased crash risk. The study through VTTI with Sheila G. Klauer, Jeremy Sudweeks, Jeffrey S. Hickman and Vicki L. Neale conducted the analysis to understand more about the relative risks associated with driving behaviors known to be dangerous from previous studies. The report "How Risky Is It? An assessment of the relative risk of engaging in potentially unsafe driving behaviors," is available online at www.aaafoundation.org

Safety Groups Tout Dynamic Rollover Test For Vehicles

Consumer groups demonstrated a privately developed vehicle rollover test that they say government should use to force automakers to strengthen car and truck roofs. The demonstration by Public Citizen and the Center for Auto Safety is part of a lobbying effort to get the U.S. government to use a dynamic rollover test -- one in which the vehicle is moving when it rolls. Videos of dynamic rollover testing are available at: www.autosafety.org

Study Provides Researchers With Important New Tools To Measure Driver Distraction

Researchers conducting a four-year, \$4-million study with major funding by the USDOT evaluated how drivers balance their attention between the road and other activities such as tuning the radio, listening to books on tape, dialing a hand-held cell phone and entering a destination into a navigation system. The results will help researchers and auto industry engineers determine how multi-tasking while driving affects driver attention and performance. The results also will provide automakers with tools that can help them design vehicle technologies that do not overly distract drivers. The report concludes that no single measurement tool captures the effects of distraction - or workload - on driver performance. The research also highlights the need to correlate laboratory results with on-road, real-world data to truly assess how driving performance is affected by multi- tasking behind the wheel.

Source: PR Newswire

Auto Insurance Costs Will Drop For Many U.S. Drivers

A forecast by the Insurance Information Institute predicts the cost of auto insurance will drop by 0.5% in 2007, the first decline since 1999. The group based its forecast on recent auto claims and the national report of auto insurance rates released last week by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. The main reason for the decreasing rates is a decline in auto crashes, in part due to safer cars and roads. The decline has also been attributed to some states barring or restricting late-night driving by teenagers. Although such programs have been in place for a while, they're finally starting to have an impact on insurance rates.

A Cost-Benefit Analysis Of Risk-Reduction Strategies Targeted At Older Drivers

The risk of motor-vehicle collisions increases as driving-related functional abilities decline. These declines can accompany normal or pathological aging and can be identified through driving-related functional screening exams upon license renewal. The objective of this cost-benefit analysis was to



determine the utility of four functional screening procedures used to identify drivers at risk for motor-vehicle collisions, as well as an intervention designed to maintain or improve functional abilities. Improving functional abilities in older adults has potential far-reaching health and financial impacts which are broader than their impact of maintaining mobility. Screening drivers upon license renewal is not currently beneficial because the available technology cannot consistently identify drivers at risk for a collision. However, the speed-of-processing intervention has demonstrated efficacy in improving driving competence and is a non-invasive, moderate-cost intervention that has the potential to protect the safety and mobility, as well as the financial interests, of older drivers and the community at large.

Source: Viamonte SM, Ball KK, Kilgore M. Traffic Injury Prev 2006; 7(4): 352-9

Trends Over Time In The Risk Of Driver Death: What If Vehicle Designs Had Not Improved?

Passenger vehicle driver death rates per million vehicle registrations declined steadily during calendar years 1985-2004. The present study sought to separate the effect of vehicle design changes from this trend. After separating out the vehicle design effects and making adjustments for the vehicle age effects, a different picture emerged of trends in death rates over time. Absent the vehicle design changes, the historical decline in driver fatality risk would have ended in 1993, with risk climbing ever since. This underlying trend has been obscured by changes in the vehicle fleet. The push for vehicle improvements has been worthwhile and can be credited with saving thousands of lives. However, the analysis shows that the gains in occupant protection from vehicle design improvements have been offset partially by an increasingly risky environment in recent years. Therefore, more attention needs to be paid to programs targeting improvement in roadway design and driver behavior.

Source: Farmer CM, Lund AK. Traffic Injury Prev 2006; 7(4): 335-42.

News from the USDOT

USDOT Study Finds Just Over Half Of Commercial Drivers Wear Seat Belts

A recent study conducted for the USDOT found that just over half of all commercial truck drivers (CMV) wear their safety belts – compared to 82 percent of passenger vehicle drivers! The DOT reports that almost 700 CMV drivers lose their lives each year in truck crashes. Many CMV drivers believe.... wearing a safety belt is a personal decision that doesn't affect anyone else. The fact is not wearing a safety belt can certainly affect their family and loved ones. It can also affect other motorists since wearing a safety belt can help you avoid losing control of your truck in a crash. It is also the law; Federal regulations require commercial vehicle drivers to buckle up. The Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Belt Partnership is dedicated to increasing safety belt use among CMV drivers. We believe all drivers need to Be Ready. Be Buckled. For more information on CMV driver safety belt use and outreach material, visit the CMV Safety Belt Partnership web site at: www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt

NHTSA Publishes Event Data Recorder Final Rule

In response to the growing practice in the motor vehicle industry of voluntarily installing event data recorders (EDRs) in an increasing number of light vehicles, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has published a final rule that specifies uniform requirements for the accuracy, collection, storage, survivability and retrievability of onboard motor vehicle crash event data in passenger cars and other light vehicles equipped with EDRs. The rule is intended to standardize the data obtained through the devices so that they may be put to the most effective future use. The rule requires that EDRs installed in light vehicles record a minimum set of specified data elements; standardizes the format in which those data are recorded; helps to ensure the crash survivability of EDRs and their data by requiring that EDRs function during and after the front and side vehicle crash tests specified in two federal motor vehicle safety standards; and requires vehicle manufacturers to



ensure the commercial availability of the tools necessary to enable crash investigators to retrieve data from EDRs. With some exceptions, light vehicles manufactured on or after Sept. 1, 2010, that are equipped with an EDR must comply with this rule, which became effective Oct. 27, 2006.

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Calls On Nation's Most Congested Cities To Join The Fight Against Congestion

U.S. DOT Secretary Mary E. Peters urged state and city transportation officials to partner with the Department of Transportation to fight traffic congestion in the Nation's major metropolitan areas. Through the "Urban Partnership Agreement," the Department would provide qualified states and metropolitan areas, with a combination of grants, loans, credit support, regulatory relief and technical assistance to operationally test advanced technologies, such as ramp metering and real-time travel information systems, designed to reduce traffic congestion.

New Data Reveals America's Traffic Congestion Getting Worse

Travel on American highways climbed to an all-time high in 2005, said USDOT Secretary Mary Peters. According to the newly released "Highway Statistics 2005," an annual compilation of data reported to the FHWA by all U.S. states and territories, Americans drove nearly three trillion miles on American highways last year representing an eight percent increase over travel in 2004 and nearly 20 percent more than in 1995. There were 241.2 million vehicles registered in the United States last year, including 6.2 million motorcycles – the most ever recorded in both categories. To view "Highway Statistics 2005", visit: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/ohpi/hss/hsspubs.htm>

Work-Life

Mitsubishi Motors Employees Form Kids Safety First Filling Need For Automotive Safety Education Materials

In 2004, Mitsubishi employees formed the CA based 501(C)(3) organization Kids Safety First (KSF). KSF is a small, all volunteer, grassroots, non-profit organization that provides free automotive child safety materials to police, fire and rescue, schools and pre-natal centers throughout the United States. "We were frustrated by our continuing experiences with parents and caregivers who did not know the correct way to restrain their children and who were also not fully aware of the dangers presented by airbags to infants and children if placed in the front passenger seat of an airbag equipped vehicle," said Jorgen Weterrings, Co-Founder and President of KSF and Director of Product Legal Affairs for Mitsubishi Motors North America, Inc. in Cypress, CA. They worked with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety to develop the materials. For additional information, visit: www.kidssafetyfirst.org

International Traffic Safety News

UK Holiday Campaign Reminds Employers To Implement Drink-Drive Policies

The UK government and police have joined forces for the annual THINK! drink-driving campaign, now in its 30th year. Company car drivers involved in collisions over the holiday period will automatically be tested for drink-driving as part of a new UK government campaign. Fleet experts say the move should prompt companies who do not have drink-drive policies in place to introduce them now. This year's campaign has a particular focus on young drivers but anyone involved in a crash in England or Wales during December will be breathalysed. Road safety organizations say the campaign gives fleets a timely reminder to ensure they have communicated their drink and drugs policies to drivers. Roger Vincent, spokesman for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) said: 'This campaign is a reminder to companies about their responsibilities to their drivers. If they have been



turning a blind eye in the past to drink-drive policies, then now is the time to rectify that and ensure they have a specific policy as part of their occupational road risk policy.' The campaign comes as research by Churchill Insurance suggests four million motorists will drink and drive over the festive season. Source: FleetNewsNet

UK Drivers Call For Total Ban On Mobile Phone Use In Cars

Three years after a law was introduced in the UK banning the use of hand-held units in cars, a new survey has found that many drivers do not believe it goes far enough. More than half of drivers want a complete ban on mobile phone use in cars to ensure their safety on the road. More than 1,000 drivers were involved in the study by road safety charity Brake and breakdown service Green Flag. According to Brake chief executive Mary Williams, "Mobile phones continue to cause deaths and injuries on our roads. It is high time the government took steps to ensure the law is properly enforced, and extended the ban on using mobile phones while driving to reflect research that shows using a hands-free phone at the wheel can be equally deadly." As part of the Road Safety Bill, which was given Royal Assent last month, the penalties for using a hand-held mobile phone while driving and for failing to have proper control of a vehicle will be increased to include three penalty points and a £60 fixed penalty fine.

Europe Gets Organized To Cut Roadway Crashes

A new report from the European Road Assessment Programme (EuroRAP), Getting Organised to Make Roads Safe, urges member states to 'get organised' to stem the half million lives lost on the roads in the last 10 years. The report reveals high-risk routes across Europe where these deaths are concentrated. Getting the safety details right means roads that don't make crashes more likely and that are more forgiving when crashes do happen. The EU target of a 50 per cent cut in roads deaths by 2010 will remain an aspiration unless authorities get organized to deliver systematic safety engineering programs on the necessary scale. According to EC Vice President in charge of Transport, Jacques Barrot, "Many lives could be saved and many accidents avoided if the existing road infrastructure was managed according to the best available know-how on safety engineering."

Canadian Gov't Seeks Crackdown On Drugged Driving

New Canadian legislation will crack down on people who drive after using illicit drugs, by issuing heavy fines and jail terms. Canada's Conservative government introduced the legislation containing harsher penalties also making it harder for drivers to challenge the results of alcohol breath tests in court. The measure is supported by the Canadian chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, as well as police. It would impose a minimum \$1,000 fine on a first conviction for alcohol or other drug impaired driving, with a mandatory 30-day jail term for repeat offenders and 120 days in jail for three-time offenders. Those whose impaired driving leads to death could face life in prison. Drivers in possession of illicit drugs would face a six-month licenses suspension and up to five years in jail.

China's Traffic Congestion Public Health Concern

The downside to China's surging car market is that the country's road and transport infrastructure is overburdened, and road deaths are up and average traffic speeds are dropping. According to a World Bank representative the urban transport problems in China are getting worse and more work is needed to better manage the process of motorization. Traffic jams are a fact of life in Beijing. With traffic jams now the norm rather than the exception, the fun is going out of driving. But more important, in China, congestion is a health hazard, and it's holding back economic growth.



Volvo's Upcoming City Safety System Avoids Urban Collisions

Claiming it can cut rear-end crashes by as much as 50%, Volvo Car Corp. unveiled its City Safety low-speed, collision-avoidance system in Gothenburg, Sweden. The radar-scanning system will be introduced in two years on an all-new Volvos. The Swedish automaker has yet to decide if City Safety will be standard equipment or an option. Volvo says City Safety's sensor is limited by fog, mist, snow or heavy rain, as are other radar systems. Drivers will be urged to keep the windshield free of dirt, ice and snow. An alert is activated on the instrument panel if the radar is blocked and reminds the driver to clean the windshield. Volvo engineers say City Safety could, in some cases, prevent hitting pedestrians but cannot guarantee the present system will do that in all situations.

Police Deny Decline In Driver Training

Data released by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) showed that the number of deaths involving police vehicles rose in the UK to 48 during 2005-2006, a five-fold increase since 1997. Police fleets have denied that a decline in training standards is to blame for a rise in fatal crashes involving their vehicles. Representatives from the safety organization, RoadPeace, claim that forces were failing to fund proper training for police drivers.

The Road Safety Monitor: Drugs And Driving

The Road Safety Monitor is a public opinion survey developed and managed by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) to take the pulse of Canadians on key road safety issues. It has been conducted annually since 2001 and includes a core set of questions that are asked each year to provide information on trends in attitudes, opinions and behaviors, supplemented by a set of questions that probe more deeply into special, topical, and emerging issues. There is evidence from the 2005 survey that the public is concerned about the issue of drugs and driving. The survey found that 2.4% of survey respondents admitted to driving after using marijuana/hashish in the past year representing a significant increase in the frequency of marijuana/hashish use and driving over the past three years. Also consistent with previous research, the survey found a high correlation between alcohol use and marijuana/hashish use. 69% of those who reported driving after using marijuana/hashish also reported driving within two hours of drinking. The co-occurrence of these two substances increases the risk of collision and is a concern for traffic safety.

Source: Simpson H, Singhal D, Vanlaar W, Mayhew D. Traffic Injury Research Foundation. Ontario, Canada: Traffic Injury Research Foundation, 2006. Download the TIRF Report at:
http://www.trafficinjuryresearch.com/publications/PDF_publications/RSM_Drugs_and_Driving_2005.pdf

Traffic Accidents From The Motorcycle Couriers' Perspective: Feedback For Health Promotion

This research is the result of a qualitative study in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, aimed at exploring traffic accident risk from the motorcycle couriers' point of view. According to the research subjects, all motorcycle couriers, the traffic accident risk is inherent to their daily work duties and is produced by personal and social interests like money, speed, and urgency. Motorcycle couriers attempt to control such risks by using self-defense strategies. Considering the high incidence of traffic accidents with motorcycle couriers in Porto Alegre, these strategies have apparently not been effective. This research emphasizes that traffic accidents involving motorcycle couriers are work-related accidents, and that health promotion measures to prevent them should target not only the couriers themselves but also their employers and customers.

Source: Veronese AM, Oliveira DL. Cad Saude Publica 2006; 22(12): 2717-2.